

From: John Stewart
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 4:09pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I think the proposed settlement with Microsoft is a very bad idea. Dan Kegel, whose petition I signed, outlines many of the problems in great detail, but I wanted to add one example specific to my own experience.

I have spent the last three years working for two different start-ups here in Seattle. It is rare for a week to go by without someone saying "Well, let's hope Microsoft doesn't do X, 'cause if they do there goes that part of our business." This company is so huge, with so many resources, and such a vast scope of what "fits" into Windows, that no one is safe from them. I work with dedicated, talented programmers and testers, with years of experience in the field. We have chosen, in some cases with a related loss of income, to work for anyone other than Microsoft, because of our concerns with what they are doing to computing, and to preserve some choice for consumers and businesses in the world of software.

All that said, we all worry any time we hear something new from across the lake. We never know what they will decide to implement next that will take away our ability to exist. You can be better than Microsoft technically, but you can't compete with "free," and no one else has their brand name and marketing budget.

As long as Microsoft has the freedom to break the rules with impunity, the marketplace of ideas in terms of computer software will suffer. Even if Windows continues to dominate the desktop, which seems highly likely, at the very least it would be nice if people other than Microsoft's applications developers had an honest shot at selling product and making a go of things.

Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,

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